



# School of Health & Social Sciences Spotlight on Research



Issue One January, 2010

## £1.7m for groundbreaking cancer diagnosis research

IN WHAT has been described as a groundbreaking research programme, Professor Richard Bayford, of the Department of Natural Sciences, has won a three-year award, worth £1.7 million, to study and apply a new technique that could improve the detection and diagnosis of serious illness.

The award, from the EPSRC, is designed to help the development of a novel, non-invasive, portable method of imaging the body, called Multi-frequency Electrical Impedance Tomography (MfEI). This utilizes state-of-the-art nanotechnology.

The spectacular advantage of the technique is that it may help visualise a primary lesion in the body and enhance the chance of early diagnosis and localisation of metastasis and/or early cancer spread. A second advantage is that it removes the application of ionizing radiation. The technique, instead, uses nanotechnology to apply non-ionizing radiation.

The new research has exciting possibilities. "The key aim," says Richard, "is to develop a truly original and clinically applicable nanotechnology MfEI-based imaging method for diagnosis of colon cancer, with a sensitivity

that can match barium enema and colonoscopy."

It is also much cheaper than conventional imaging/diagnostic techniques. A prototype system can be produced for £10,000, a figure that can be reduced if manufactured at sufficient volume.



**Prof Richard Bayford at his Hatchcroft lab**

Future work will look at using the technique in a therapeutic context. "Having addressed the scientific and technological challenges of this novel imaging technique in stage one," Richard says, "we ultimately aim to exploit the binding properties of nanoparticles to cancer cells to develop therapeutic regimes to selectively destroy them."

### More to explore

Zhang, Y., Passmore, P.J., & Bayford, R.H. (2009). Visualization of multidimensional and multimodal tomographic medical imaging data, a case study. *Philos Transact A Math Phys Eng Sci*, 367, 3121-48.

Soleimani, M. & Bayford R.H. (2009). New and emerging tomographic imaging techniques in medical and industrial applications. Introduction. *Philos Transact A Math Phys Eng Sci*, 367, 3017-9.

## Ray Iles introduces *Spotlight*



**Prof Ray Iles**

WELCOME TO the first of what I hope will be many editions of *Spotlight on Research*, a Newsletter designed to let you know about research undertaken in HSSC.

*Spotlight's* aim is to highlight original research work being done here and to signal some of our notable achievements.

Shortly, the School's new research webpages will be up and running and this newsletter, and regular updates, will appear there.

For the first issue, we are producing the newsletter in electronic and hard copy so that everyone has the opportunity to read and enjoy.

If you have any new book, grant, publication, award, guest lecture or any other indicator of research esteem our colleagues should know about, please contact the editors (Dr G Neil Martin, [n.martin@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:n.martin@mdx.ac.uk), and Natasha Collins, [n.collins@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:n.collins@mdx.ac.uk)). Neil and Natasha would be delighted to hear from you.

**Professor Ray Iles**, Associate Dean-Research, School of Health and Social Sciences

## Music & Language seminars secure funding

IF MUSIC, in Thomas Carlyle's words, is the speech of angels, a group of Middlesex academics will soon be dusting off their harps.

The Language and Communication Research Group at the Department of Psychology secured funding in December from the British Psychological Society to hold a series of seminars and workshops on the exploration of new directions in the study of the relationship between language and music.

"The last decade or so has seen the field of research develop rapidly, both theoretically and

empirically," says Dr Fabia Franco, who led the Group's proposal with colleagues from the Universities of Cambridge and Munich.

"Language and music share many features," she argues, "they are both composed of sequences of sub-units and both require these units to be organised according to conventional structural rules. They vary pitch, temporal and rhythmic features to convey meaning and they both organize coordinated or joint social actions."

Over 20 speakers have already committed to the seminar series, which will comprise two or three specially organized events here and at the Cambridge Centre for Music and Science. Future

proposals include a major conference and a book based on seminar presentations. The last major workshop organized by the group led to the publication of a book by Psychology Press (see page 3)

Dr Franco hopes the event will bring disparate disciplines together to study a universal experience. "The aim," she says, "is to consolidate research on language and music as an interdisciplinary field with roots in psychology, music, linguistics, neuroscience and informatics."

## Inside this issue:

<b>Dyslexia: Myths/ reality</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Mdx, drugs &amp; alcohol</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Psychology of chocolate</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Diagnosing illness early</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Sleep &amp; memory</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>On-line sex offenders</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Why we kill</b>	<b>7</b>

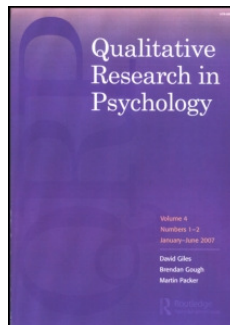
## Special editions...



TWO ACADEMICS are editing special issues of journals. Dr Danny Kelly, Reader in Nursing, has guest edited a special edition of *The*

*European Journal of Oncology Nursing* on cancer in teenagers and young adults (September 2009), while Dr Nollaig Frost,

Senior Lecturer in Psychology, is guest editing a special issue of *Qualitative Research in Psychology* on pluralism in qualitative research in psychology (this issue is due out next year).



## New books just published

**Adler, J., Loucks, N. & Smith-Holt, S. (Eds.)** (2009). *Why We Kill...* Willan.

**Borossa, J. and Ward, I. (Eds.)** (2009). *Psychoanalysis, Fascism, Fundamentalism* (Special Issue of Psychoanalysis and History) Edinburgh University Press.

**Brunswick, N.** (2009). *Dyslexia. A Beginner's Guide*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications.

**Brunswick, N., McDougall, S. & de Mornay Davies, P.** (in press). *Learning to read and spell in different orthographies*. Psychology Press.

**Brunswick, N.** (in press). *The Dyslexia Handbook 2009/10*. British Dyslexia Association.

**Goodman, A.** (2009). *Social Work with Drug and Substance Misusers*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Exeter: Learning Matters.

**Hafford-Letchfield, T.** (2009). *Management and Organisations in Social Work*. (2nd edition) Learning Matters Ltd: Exeter.

**Martin, G.N. & Brunswick, N.** (2010). *MyPsychLab*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Pearson: Harlow.

**Martin, G.N. & Carlson, N.R.** (2009). *Psychology*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Harlow: Pearson.

**Ruggiero, V.** (2009). *Edebiyat ve Suç*. Istanbul: Everest (Turkish edition of *Crime in Literature*).

**Ruggiero, V.** (2009). *La violencia política*. Barcelona: Anthopos (Spanish edition of *Understanding Political Violence*).

## E-repository

THE UNIVERSITY'S e-repository is now up and running and is being added to daily. This is an on-line compendium of staff output since 2000 and will become crucial in the run-up to the Research Excellence Framework. The major

aim of the repository is to make details of ALL University staff's research output available on-line. All staff should ensure that they routinely send new material for adding to their Research Team leaders.

## Lord Coe opens new cancer lab

LORD SEBASTIAN Coe opened the University's new and innovative laboratory for cancer treatment research, in September.

The lab, based in the Hatchcroft building at the University's flagship Hendon campus, has received multi-million pound investment.

See how the local press reported the story here: <http://www.times-uk/>

## Catholic services for old people

DR. LOUISE Ryan and her team at the Social Policy Research Centre are currently collecting data on how the Catholic community delivers their services to old people.

The research commissioned by Caritas Social Policy Action Network aims to see what aspects of help and assistance can be improved, and highlight areas where old people are being well-supported either formally or informally. A brief report on the

study can be found here:

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/articles/a0000679.shtml>

### More to explore

**Ryan, L.** (2009). *Ethnic and Linguistic Chaplains in England and Wales: a research report*. Commissioned by Catholic Bishop's Conference of England and Wales, July 2009.

# What do we really know about dyslexia?



**Dr Nicola Brunswick**

DR NICOLA Brunswick, Senior Lecturer in Psychology at Middlesex University reveals that her new book, *Dyslexia - A Beginner's Guide* (Oneworld Publishers), came about due to her noticing a lack of information on the condition for non specialists.

The book which is endorsed by the British Dyslexia Association (BDA) is "for any lay reader who just wants to know about dyslexia", Dr Brunswick told *Spotlight*.

"I also wanted to address some of the silly myths about dyslexia that regularly do the rounds and which make anyone who knows anything about dyslexia want to scream!"

For example, the book shows that:

- \* Dyslexia is a life-long condition, not a phase that children grow out of
- \* Dyslexia is much less common in regular languages, like Italian and Spanish, than irregular ones such as English and Danish
- \* Bilingual speakers can be dyslexic in one language but not the other
- \* Around 33-43% of people diagnosed with dyslexia will have a family history of the disorder
- \* Compared to non-dyslexic readers, dyslexic readers underuse some part of the brain when they read but over use other parts
- \* Reversing letters when reading and writing is not a sign of dyslexia (inexperienced, non-dyslexic readers do this)
- \* Developmental dyslexia exists

Dr Brunswick explains that she had been thinking about writing a book on her specialism, dyslexia, for some years before she actually started writing it. And once started, it took Nicky about a year to complete, fitting in the writing around her job and other commitments.

Dr Brunswick added that she was very grateful to receive some very positive feedback for the book. Nicola said: "A couple of people who run the BDA telephone helplines have told me that they keep copies of the book to hand and they've found them extremely helpful in giving advice to callers."

So is Nicola now going to put her feet up after the success of her first book? Hardly! She has another book coming out within the next couple of months: *The Dyslexia Handbook 2010-2011*, which she has edited for the BDA.

Another book she has co-edited

with Dr Paul de Mornay Davies from Middlesex University and Bournemouth University's Professor Sine McDougall is forthcoming.

*Reading and Dyslexia in Different Orthographies* is based on a two day workshop which ran at Middlesex University in 2006 and is published by Psychology Press. It is out next year.

**More to explore**

**Brunswick, N.** (2009). Dyslexia. In K. Malmkjær (Ed.) *The Linguistics Encyclopedia* (3rd edition). Routledge.

**Brunswick, N.** (in press). Unimpaired reading development and dyslexia across different languages. In N. Brunswick, S. McDougall and P. de Mornay Davies (eds) *Learning to read and spell in different orthographies*. Psychology Press.

**Brunswick, N. & Martin, G.N.** (2010). Visuospatial ability and dyslexia. In N. Brunswick (Ed.) *The Dyslexia Handbook 2009/10*. British Dyslexia Association.

## £€£ Banking on success €€€

FINANCIAL TIMES are hard, but the School's research income is healthy. In recent months, staff has recently secured over £2million of funding, including £1.8m by the Dept of Natural Sciences (see main story), £35K by the Dept of

Criminology & Sociology, £93K by Nursing and Midwifery, £23K by the Dept of Psychology, £50K by the Dept of Social Sciences and £750K by the Flood Hazard Research Centre £50-60K by Social Work. In the past month, Prof Lynn MacDonald

successfully bid for £50K from the ESRC for social work training. Other grants include 'Good relations framework measurement' grant from the Equality and Human Rights Commission to Prof Eleonore Kofman, European Commission funding

for studying social responses to organised crime to Prof Vincenzo Ruggiero, and a major Department of Health grant to study screening programmes for sickle cell and thalassaemia to Dr Danny Kelly and Prof Irena Papadopoulou.

## A new pan-European Masters launched



**Professor Betsy Thom**

THE DRUG and Alcohol Research Group (DARG), headed by Professor Betsy Thom and Professor Anthony Goodman has recently launched a number of exciting, new initiatives including a new pan-European Masters programme.

DARG was created to link researchers, teaching staff, post graduate students across our

School of Health and Social Sciences. The group provides a forum for interdisciplinary collaboration both within the university and with colleagues in other countries.

Prof Thom told *Spotlight*: "One strand of our work focuses on the policies and community initiatives surrounding drugs and alcohol consumption and the other is young people and alcohol 'use', which must not be confused with 'misuse' because much of the research is centred around the cultural aspects of alcohol as well as the problematic."

One of a number of recent research publications by DARG members is: 'Intoxication and Intoxicated Behaviour in Contemporary European Cultures: Myths, Realities and the Implications for Policy, Prevention, Practice and Research' – which emerged from a workshop involving nine European countries, organised

by Prof Thom and Irmgard Eisenbach-Stangl.

One of Betsy's team, Dr Rachael Herring, Senior Research Fellow has recently obtained a grant from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to fund research into 'being young and dry in a drinking culture'. It starts in 2010.

Prof Thom and her team are developing a European Masters in Drug and Alcohol Studies which will be rolled out in September 2010. The programme will run in Denmark, Italy and Slovenia.

In fact, in April 2010 a pilot module from this Masters will take place at Middlesex University, bringing together under one roof, some of the Europe-based lecturers from this new programme.

As we write, Betsy is due to fly to

Lisbon for further progress work on the Masters programme. She has a hectic couple of months ahead: "On December 8, I'm giving a talk in Scotland on 'community engagement and alcohol multi-component approach."

"In February I'll be in Ireland at a conference talking about 'partnership approach to engaging communities'."

**More to explore**

Eisenbach-Stangl, I., Moskalewicz J., & Thom B. (eds.) (2009). *Two Worlds of Drug Consumption in Late Modern Societies*. Vienna: Ashgate

Berridge, V., Herring, R. & Thom B (2009) Binge drinking: a confused concept and its contemporary history. *Social History of Medicine, in press*.

## The joy of Xcoatl...at the British Museum



IT MAY be the temporary home of the Montezuma exhibition, but the British Museum was recently host to a more unusual chocolate-based event. In December, Dr G Neil Martin, Reader in Psychology, was a guest speaker at the first London International Confection Conference at the Bloomsbury venue.

Prompted by his research on taste and smell - particularly the effect of chocolate on behaviour (Neil published the first study of the effect of chocolate aroma on human brain activity)- the event's organizer invited him to share his knowledge of the subject with leading figures from the chocolate industry, including Thornton's, Elizabeth Shaw, Callebaut and Guylan.



Dr G. Neil Martin

The clichéd view of chocolate is that it has a cardioprotective effect- newspapers are awash with stories that it staves off heart disease. Dark chocolate, in particular, is high in flavonoids that are considered antioxidant and can help protect the heart.

There is some evidence for this, Neil says, but the psychology of chocolate is throwing up some more intriguing findings. "Research shows that people cycle for longer after drinking milk chocolate than a carbohydrate-equivalent, energy-restoring drink, for example. They also become exhausted less quickly. Curiously, and this is a recent development, people with Parkinson's Disease prefer chocolate more than healthy people do."

Most people might feel better after a bar of chocolate, but is there a real link between eating chocolate and mood? "Few studies exist, but those that do are positive," Neil says, "People who eat chocolate report being in a better mood and feel less sad after watching a sad film -there is no equivalent, positive effect after watching a happy film."

Mood changes, though, can be brief. One

study of the effect of palatable and unpalatable chocolate found that the later improved mood, but this lasted about 3 minutes. After then, people's mood was the same regardless of what they had eaten.

And the aroma of chocolate? "Well, people spend longer looking at pictures in the presence of chocolate odour and also believe them to be aesthetically more sophisticated. Our early study showed that it reduced a type of brain activation associated with attention. Our recent study found that it had no effect on motor function, but chocolate did make people feel less tense, depressed and confused."

When the chocolate/brain study was published, Superdrug used the research as the basis for a marketing campaign that led to its flagship store being scented with the perfume of chocolate. On Valentine's Day.

Does Neil see any dangers in studying and promoting a topic that is of such interest to the media? "You are always careful and your antennae are never off," he says, "and you do turn down more invitations that you accept. I was once asked to discuss aromatherapy on one of Nigel Marven's TV programmes. I was to do this while having a massage. I made my excuses. The last invitation was from Chris Evans's Radio 2 show, though, and that type of invitation is always nice. I enjoy telling people about my work. And so long as people are interested in hearing about it, I'll carry on doing it."

Neil wrote an article on the psychology of chocolate in the October issue of *Kennedy's Confectionery*. You can see a version of the article here:

<http://content.yudu.com/Library/A1gmfb/kc09octpplo/resources/24.htm>

And for those who were wondering, Xcoatl is the ancient Aztec word for chocolate. It means 'bitter water'.

## News round-up

**Professor Hemda Garelick** convened a session on Analytical and Risk Considerations for Emerging Environmental Issues for the 42<sup>nd</sup> IUPAC congress 'Chemistry Solutions' at Glasgow in August and has become panel reviewer for the Norwegian Research Council.

**Dr Danny Kelly** has co-authored a report to CLIC SERGENT on cancer symptom diagnosis in young people and has been invited to the board of the European Cancer Organisations (ECCO) as Nursing Representative for the period 2010-2012.

**Professor (I) Rena Papadopoulos** has become a member of the Scientific Committee of the ENE Nursing Conference and recently hosted the European Transcultural Association's annual meeting.

**Dr G Neil Martin** has become a founding member of the British Institute for Humour, based at the University of Surrey.

**Professor Michael Traynor** made a keynote presentation at ECCO.

**Dr Agnieszka Golec de Zavala** has had a paper accepted in the world's leading social psychology journal, the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

**Professor Ray Iles** has been elected a Fellow of the Institute of Biology.

**Dr Nicky Brunswick** has contributed the 'dyslexia' entry for the third edition of Routledge's *Linguistics Encyclopaedia*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition; and accompanied Lord Sebastian Coe to the British Dyslexia Association's Spellbound Ball earlier in the year.

**Dr Tunk Abayak** has presented to the Bratislava and Slovak Foreign Policy Association of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**Dr Fabia Franco** was invited paper to give a paper, Embodied attention in infant pointing, at the "Agency and Joint Attention" conference in New York.

## International expert on ethics visits School

OCTOBER SAW a visit from international expert on research ethics, Professor Ronald Francis from Victoria University, Melbourne. Regularly consulted by the Australian government to advise on ethics issues, Ronald is the author of several books on management and ethics, including the second edition of his successful '*Ethics for Psychologists*' (Wiley Blackwell), published in July 2009. The event was hosted by the Department of Psychology.



## Femicide: a big problem, little reported

FEMICIDE, THE killing of women for being women, is a problem across the world including countries like Honduras, Nicaragua and Mexico.

Dr Sarah Bradshaw was recently invited to speak on Radio Four's *Women's Hour* about the plight of women in Honduras, where there had been a military coup and the president was forced to leave the country.

Dr Bradshaw spoke about the impact the coup had on the country's women and how it was influenc-

ing, already worrying levels of institutional violence and, in particular, femicide. This was an issue not being covered by the mainstream news.

Although femicide occurs in all countries at various levels - in places like Central America - the system for recording these types of deaths is not sophisticated in the sense that they are not logged separately.

Dr Bradshaw told *Spotlight* that this all links in with her ongoing work in Nicaragua where she is in-

involved with non-profit organisation Puntos de Encuentro (Spanish for meeting places or common ground) which works to promote women's and young people's human rights.

"When the teaching term finishes, I go there every year and spend up to two months working with the organisation. I have been working with them for ten years now. I do research, training and also work on their projects. They have a magazine, a radio show and also a TV 'soap opera'

which is designed to entertain but also inform about women's rights," Dr Bradshaw explained.

In addition, it also links with the advocacy work Dr Bradshaw does here in the UK where she uses her research to lobby for change. So over the years she has done presentations at events in the House of Commons, in Brussels and India.

**More to explore**

**Bradshaw, S. & Linneker, B. (2009).** Gender perspectives on disaster reconstruction in Nicaragua: Reconstructing roles and relations? In E. Enarson and D. Chakrabarti (eds) *Women, Gender and Disaster: Global issues and initiatives*, Sage: India

## Warning to young people - go back to your GP



Dr Danny Kelly

AS THE Government reveals research that up to 10,000 people die needlessly of cancer every year due to late diagnosis, a Middlesex University academic has an urgent message to teenagers and young people everywhere – to keep complaining when they are not well and refuse being fobbed off by GPs.

Dr Danny Kelly, Reader in Nursing based at the Uni-

versity's Archway campus, has been involved with research - funded by CLIC Sargent, the children and young people's cancer charity.

After following 24 young people who had been diagnosed with cancer in the last two months, Dr Kelly and researchers from Great Ormond Street Hospital and the Institute of Child Health found that too many young people are diagnosed with cancer far too late.

The young people, aged 15 to 24, were from four UK cities - Southampton, Manchester, Leeds and London. Results showed that they often had to return to their doctors time and time again before their symptoms were taken seriously.

Many of the young people

interviewed were subject to prolonged suffering and acute distress. Dr Kelly told *Spotlight*: "I have been involved in research into cancer in young people for some years and it has become clear recently that this age group do not do so well. That's why we decided to do some work around that.

"Nobody had done this work before. We looked at interviews and case notes to see how long young people were treated and that ranged from just a few weeks to a few years. Some symptoms were very sudden. For example one teenager just threw an apple core and his arm fell off!"

The research group is now hoping to get their message out to GPs, that al-

though cancer in the young age group remains rare, there are always exceptions.

Dr Kelly is now looking into the end of life care for those young people who die from their cancer. "There is very little information into understanding family needs," he says

"My work will look at how professionals communicate with children and their families in a children's care unit."

**More to explore**

**Kelly, D. & Gibson, F. (2009).** Meeting the needs of young people with cancer: a lesson in change. *European Journal of Oncology Nursing*. 13: 147-48.

Doug, M., Adi, Y., Williams, J., Paul, M., Kelly, D., Petchey, R. & Carter, Y. (in press). Transition to adult services for children and young people with palliative care needs: a systematic review. *Archives of Disease in Childhood*.

## The secret to a good memory? Good sleep



Dr Dagmara Annaz (middle) with fellow researcher & baby in Bolivia

WHEN the Top Gear presenters took their BBC1 motoring show to Bolivia, they discovered that altitude hypoxia reduced their cars' effectiveness (as well as making the presenters feel very drunk). In addition, living at high altitude, ie, over 3000 feet above sea level, affects your sleep.

And so how can children in the country develop properly? Dr Dagmara Annaz, from the Department of Psychology, has just returned from the South American

country where, together with a team of medical doctors, she examined sleep at high altitude and whether it had an impact on the development of the brain.

One striking discovery the team made was that people of all ages had disturbed sleep at night, both in terms of quality and quantity. This was concerning because the medical team know that sleeping helps learning as memory is consolidated.

Dr Annaz told *Spotlight*: "You have to have good quality and quantity of sleep. If not, it will impair your learning and memory."

The team spent some two weeks testing over 300 people from six month infants to the elderly. Bolivian Channel Five even came along to film the team's experiments. "We looked at the impact high altitude has on medical health as well as neuropsychology, cardio respiratory, memory recognition, IQ testing and cognitive

development.

The experts in the team which included medical doctors from universities in Australia also suffered the effects of high altitude. Dagmara herself had to contend with disturbed sleep and nose bleeds.

An interesting discovery was that the European descendents in the area, who have been living there for about 400 years, have not fully adapted to the effects of living in such high altitude.



Dagmara with one of her toddlers in Bolivia

## Online sex offenders, an ongoing problem



Dr Elena Martellozzo

HAVING JUST completed her PhD on online sexual abuse – a case study of the Metropolitan Police's approach to the crime - Dr Elena Martellozzo wants to make an addition to the school curriculum: the education of safe internet use.

Elena joined Middlesex University just three months ago from Westminster University has a book chapter coming out next month in the area. In *Sex Offenders Use of the Internet*, published by Routledge, her topical research explores what makes sexual predators use the net.

The reason she want to educate all children at school is because

her research shows that online grooming, with the rise of social networking sites, is a serious and increasing problem.

We go for coffee at Middlesex University's Quadrangle and before Elena explains the motivations behind such difficult-to-understand behaviour, she tells me all about the unprecedented access she was granted at the MET's Paedophile Unit.

"I have analysed case studies of online grooming, distribution of indecent images of children and studied police practice," Elena said. So what does Elena reveal in the yet-to-be-published chapter?

The online sex offender, it seems, is very selective when it comes to choosing his victims. "They like *vulnerable* girls and boys," Elena stresses. She reveals that the number of boy victims is increasing all the time.

During the grooming process, where perpetrators prepare the child for eventual sexual abuse, the online sex offender will learn the child's language, and find out what young girls listen to. They will learn all the latest words children use and quite importantly, they make the child feel special.

Another way online sex offenders groom is by sending pornography with indecent images of children having sex with adults in an effort to normalise the abusive actions.

Although this is an unpleasant topic, it is very useful to communicate this secret behaviour to parents and children themselves. Elena was involved in the Met Police 2004 campaign, Safer Surfing, and they discovered that children spend hours online and they do not distinguish between the virtual and real world.

"They seem to be very confident that they are talking to someone they can trust and as they chat, the online sex offender is making them feel special," Elena explained. Earlier I had presented Elena with the recent case of Ashleigh Hall, the 17-year-old nursery nurse student who was found dead near her home in County Durham after going to meet, who she thought was a boy of 16 years on the social networking site, Facebook.

In actual fact, Ashleigh had been on her way to meet unemployed drifter Peter Chapman, 32, a registered sex offender who was charged with killing the teenager. Elena comments: "In Ashleigh's case, she fell in love with this guy."

Elena confirms that many online sex offenders create online profiles which appear completely innocent and normal. "They come from every walk of life and you have two types; those who are ex-

tremely cautious of undercover police and those who are hyper-confident, even stating that they love children under 'interests'.

Elena explained that they uncovered senior police officers online as well as school teachers, lawyers and doctors to lorry drivers. "One common trait was that the majority were middle-class, white males and amongst the victims of indecent images – many were from Eastern Europe," Elena added.

The perpetrators often lacked social skills and were insecure. Their attraction to children is that the young love unconditionally and do not judge. For her research, Elena examined quite intensely the profiles of online paedophiles and when they were discovered by the Police they would react by saying they stumbled across the images online or that the child they were grooming had in fact 'come onto' them, so they blamed the victim.

Elena's next research project will focus on the newly highlighted phenomenon of female online sex offenders.

### More to explore

Martellozzo, E. (2009). *Sex Offenders Use of the Internet*. In J Davidson & P Gottschalk (Eds), *Internet Child Abuse: Current Research & Practice*. London: Routledge

## Crimes of the powerful intrigue Professor



**Professor Vincenzo Ruggiero**

WITH THE arrest of two top Mafia figures in Sicily recently, Gianni Nicchi, 28, and Gaetano Fidanzi, 74, organised crime is not a thing of 1970s cinema nostalgia nor glossy HBO boxed sets.

And for Professor Ruggiero, who has recently returned from an Anti-Mafia conference in Italy, there is much to research.

This is just as well because he has also managed to secure over £30,000 of European Commission (EC) cash to fund research into organised crime and corruption.

In addition, the Professor in Criminology has compiled a report for the EC on national policies and approaches in dealing with the link between organised crime and corruption.

What exactly has Prof

Ruggiero's report revealed? "That corruption is widespread in Europe and that organised crime contributes to the diffusion of corrupt practices," says Vincenzo.

In other words, when corruption is wide-spread, organised crime thrives. Prof Ruggiero defines corruption as the use and abuse of power. His focus and great interest lies in the 'crimes of the privileged', as he describes them.

He is not so interested in the poor man who has to break the law to make a living but in the rich man, with numerous cars

and yachts who is still not satisfied and wants more – the crimes of the powerful.

Vincenzo's work so far has revealed that: "The boundaries are blurred between legitimate and illegitimate political/economic conduct. This applies to all European countries."

### More to explore...

**Ruggiero, V.** (2009). Transnational crime and global illicit economies'. In E Wilson (Ed), *Government of the Shadows*. London: Pluto Press.

**Ruggiero, V.** (2009). Corporate crime: A panacea for critical criminology. In JI Ross (Ed), *Cutting the Edge*. New Brunswick: Transaction.

## Why do we kill? Middlesex academics may have an answer



*Why We Kill: Understanding Violence Across Cultures and Disciplines*, edited by Nancy Loucks, Sally Holt and Joanna Adler

SINCE CAIN killed Abel, it has remained the worst crime a human could carry out – to kill another person. And Dr Joanna Adler has just co-edited a book on the subject with Nancy Loucks and Sally Smith Holt.

The book, *Why We Kill* (published by Willan) was first conceived in the aftermath of September 11th, 2001 but goes back even further in terms of discussions on interdisciplinary approaches to

homicide, terrorism, abortion and other forms of killing.

Joanna told *Spotlight*: "We went through several publishing houses none of whom were interested as they didn't know how to market it. Eventually, MU press picked it up and after a hiatus of three years, we got it ready in about six months, revising, updating and signing off proofs, as necessary".

The book initially came out over the summer but was caught up in the MU press wind down but is now being re-launched with Willan Publishing and is out now.

Dr Adler explains that the book is an accessible text aimed at psychology, criminology, social care, social work and theology students. "We consider killing from various perspectives and in various contexts. For example, Stephen Smith's chapter

is one of the very few in the literature drawing on real testimony from rank and file killers in the Rwandan Genocide.

"Maria Kaspersson writes about Homicide in the home and Peter Hodgkinson, Seema Kandelia and Rupa Reddy give a thought provoking assessment of the impact of capital punishment; whilst Kay Nooney writes about suicide, to name just a few chapters," Joanna explains.

The editors provide a cultural context to the book with insightful opening and closing chapters and short prologues to each of the contributing chapters. The strong authorial voice ties together the disparate themes considered in this eclectic book.

Joanna is currently working on the second edition of *Forensic Psychology: Concepts, debates and*

*practice* - bringing in Dr Jackie Gray as second editor. Joanna has also co-authored *My Brother's Keeper* with Burnside, Loucks and Rose.

Current research projects include an evaluation of the work of Escaping Victimhood (with Miranda Allonby) and a project looking at how London Probation is working with 'partner organisations' in the supervision of released offenders who are being dealt with under counter terrorism strategies.

The latter is with Dr Louise Ryan as co-principal investigator, and Sarah Marsden a research assistant. Both of these works are part of the initiatives she and colleagues are making with Forensic Psychological Services (FPS).

You can access more information about FPS here: [www.mdx.ac.uk/fps](http://www.mdx.ac.uk/fps)

# Inspired by Wiki

THE CENTRE for Educational Technology (CET) has launched 'Inspire Me!' a series of presentations showcasing innovative ideas and effective practices related to the embedding of technology into the teaching and learning process.

November alone had seen two fascinating talks which took place at Middlesex University's Sheppard Library. The first was by Dr Suzanne Doherty, Department of Natural Sciences on 'Enhancing learning

and teaching with wikis, improving student achievement' on 10 November.

Suzanne described how her interest in blended learning motivated her to adopt wikis in teaching final year students with the aim of writing online presentations on topics in Biosciences.

Students' contributions gradually evolved into a growing text book with each new cohort adding new material. Suzanne defines factors

contributing to student satisfaction and achievement, and reports on how wikis changed the learning culture in her modules.

And the second Inspire Me! presentation was by Ralph Moseley on 'Virtual spaces—learning spaces: Introducing Second Life to undergraduate and postgraduate students' on 19 November.

For the last few years Ralph has been experimenting with 'Second Life', a popular 3D virtual world.

## Forthcoming Seminars

**26 January 2010, 5pm, lecture theatre, CG76**

Last in the Natural Sciences Winter Seminar Series - Dr May Tassabehji, School of Medicine, University of Manchester; - *Mouse Models to Understand Human Disease*.

## Grant to visit Kazakhstan to develop multi-disciplinary training

PROFESSOR Hemda Garelick from the Department of Natural Sciences reports that her team has had a positive response with view to creating an MSc in Environmental Health and an Environmental health profession in Kazakhstan.

Alan Page responsible for the project told *Spotlight*: "The history of the ex-soviet states is that they teach brilliantly to existing disciplines, but not across disciplines or in areas where there are gaps.

"As such they have chemistry departments which do not talk to their biology departments. And engineers just see engineering solutions and not the effects of what they do on populations or users."

## Environmental Health goes pan-African

DR ALAN Page is alas off to Botswana this month to help develop a package of training from up-skilling existing staff to full degree level.

Alan hopes to create a range of Masters awards for practitioners across the whole of public health, development and support of research and training the educators to doctoral level so that they have capacity to lead research.

Zambia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Gambia and Uganda are next on the list.

Alan said: "This reduces the need to have individual learners leave the country at huge cost to study overseas. The money saved can be directed to more learners progressing, there is greater local context (ie they learn in their home country)."

# Social work given a lift with grants



**Professor Lynn McDonald**

SOCIAL WORK has had a rough ride of late but Lynn McDonald, Professor of Social Work has secured over £99,500 in Economic Social Research Council (ESRC) funding and £360,000 from the National Academy of Parenting Practitioners and Parenting Early Intervention Programmes.

The ESRC grant will go towards a research development initiative for mid-career social work academics to increase research capacity.

And the latter, Professor McDonald believes, will rival the recently reported academies for social workers by training social work students to become practitioners in the field, to help people with social problems, underpinned with a commitment to social justice.

Talking to *Spotlight*, Professor McDonald said that she based her bid on a model she had been using in her native America at the University of Wisconsin. Now, her research and values-based intervention is on the UK Government shortlist of recommended evidence based parenting programme. The programmes is called Families and School Together (FAST).

FAST involves social workers working within schools, in the form of after-school clubs for a total of eight weeks. Families come together and undertake activities with a view to socialise, and mothers are given an opportunity not to feel so isolated.

Prof McDonald explained: "This activity-based learning, coaching, empowerment helps the child learn. Group members take turns to be obedient, to talk about ideas, to identify and express feelings. Being patient in a group is related to doing well at school.

"Our approach stands out because 40% is a core component while 60% is locally adapted by the team and they always have the service-users culture in mind and so this is represented."

On Thursday, 18th March, Lynn will be giving her inaugural Professorial lecture. Entitled, 'Building protection against stress for child well-being: Parent child bonds, parent-professional partnerships and social capital', the talk will take place at the Furnival Lecture Theatre, Archway Campus, at 5pm. Everyone welcome please contact Hannah de Souza ([h.desouza@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:h.desouza@mdx.ac.uk)) to confirm your place. Tea will be provided at 4.30.



## Spotlight on Research

School of Health and Social Sciences  
Town Hall  
Hendon  
London  
NW4 4BT



Middlesex University

## And, finally...

THIS IS the first Research Newsletter for the School and we hope it is offered, to develop an earlier psychological theme, a selection of treats to sate most palates.

Our aim was to give a flavour of the interesting, novel and ground-breaking research colleagues in the school are undertaking, and to promote some of our most striking successes.

We would like to express our thanks to all contributors and interviewees who willingly and enthusiastically gave of their time.

But the work does not stop here. The next edition is already in the planning stages. So, if you have news of any award, paper, guest talk, book, chapter, research project, media appearance or any other coruscating glory that should be more widely known, please contact us...

**Dr G.Neil Martin and Natasha Collins.**



Dr G. Neil Martin

### Editorial Team:

Dr G. Neil Martin  
[n.martin@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:n.martin@mdx.ac.uk)

020 8411 6292

Natasha Collins  
[n.collins@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:n.collins@mdx.ac.uk)

020 8411 6677



Natasha Collins